

Move Small Arms Center To Arsenal

Control and direction of the Small Arms Ammunition Center in St. Louis will be taken over July 1 by the Ordnance Ammunition Center in Joliet, it was announced today by Brig. Gen. W. E. Laidlaw, OAC commander.

Ordnance Corps plans call for the Small Arms Ammunition Center to continue its current work in its present St. Louis location for a period following July 1, while its functions are being absorbed and integrated into the OAC operation at Joliet. When this integration has been completed, the Small Arms Ammunition Center at St. Louis will be discontinued.

THE PRESENT SAAC headquarters staff of about 120 officers and civilians will be reduced slowly, while carrying on the administration of the small arms ammunition program during this period.

Ordnance Ammunition Center authorities indicated that effort will be made to utilize trained Small Arms Ammunition Center personnel, and every consideration will be given to the qualified St. Louis center employees who wish to transfer to Joliet.

Increased efficiency, lower cost and improved operation of the nation's overall ammunition program will result from the move, General Laidlaw stated. He described it as part of the Army Ordnance Corps' long-range program to establish "commodity centers" in various parts of the country, with each center handling all aspects of a particular commodity, such as ammunition, tanks, artillery, etc.

SINCE 1946, the Ordnance Corps has been developing OAC as the nation's ammunition headquarters by gradually centralizing various ammunition activities at the Joliet installation. At present, the Ordnance Ammunition Center is the headquarters of the Army's artillery ammunition program which last year amounted to about \$2 billion and included the production of all artillery shells, mortar shells, rockets, aerial bombs, land mines, grenades, pyrotechnics and miscellaneous ammunition. OAC directs the nationwide procurement of parts for all this ammunition from private firms throughout the country, and also supervises the operation of 23 ammunition plants and works valued at more than \$3 billion. The OAC headquarters staff now numbers about 900 officers and civilians.